

*Pieces of Iowa's Past*, published by the Iowa State Capitol Tour Guides weekly during the legislative session, features historical facts about Iowa, the Capitol, and the early workings of state government. All historical publications are reproduced here with the actual spelling, punctuation, and grammar retained.

**February 11, 2009**

### **THIS WEEK: Capitol Grounds' Extension Project**

**BACKGROUND:** The extension project began around 1913. The goal of the project was to purchase land surrounding the Capitol in order to improve the beauty of the Capitol grounds. Furthermore, the purpose of the project was to obtain enough land for new buildings to alleviate overcrowding in the Capitol. Senate File 538 levied a tax to pay for the purchase of the property. Both Van Buren and Wapello counties filed suit against the state because it was believed by many that this statewide tax was providing Des Moines with a "new park." This case was argued before the Iowa Supreme Court, and the photographs that follow are a portion of the brief filed with the Supreme Court.

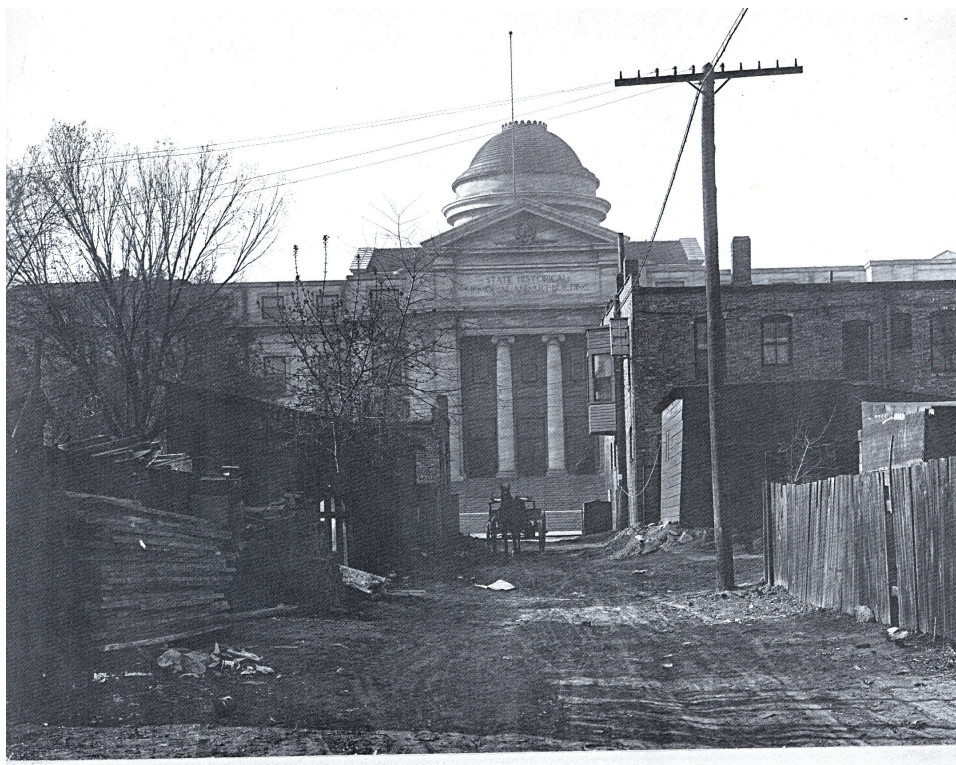
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SENATE FILE NO. 538—BY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS.

## A BILL

FOR AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE LEVY OF A SPECIAL TAX UPON THE ASSESSED VALUATION OF THE TAXABLE PROPERTY OF THE STATE FOR A PERIOD OF TEN YEARS FOR THE PURCHASE OF REAL ESTATE FOR THE EXTENSION AND FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE STATE CAPITOL GROUNDS; TO DEFINE THE LIMITS OF SAID EXTENSION; TO AUTHORIZE THE PURCHASE BY EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF ALL GROUNDS WITHIN SAID LIMITS; TO ADOPT A PLAN FOR THE LOCATION OF BUILDINGS, MONUMENTS, ETC., ON SAID EXTENDED GROUND, AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE SALE OF CERTAIN REAL ESTATE KNOWN AS “GOVERNOR SQUARE.”





**This view is taken 250 feet east of the Capitol grounds and 250 feet south of the Historical Building.**



**Another view east of the Capitol grounds and in the vicinity of building site if office building is ever constructed.**





**Another view to the south of the Capitol and Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument.**



**A view of the Capitol from the railway tracks.**



